

Engineering Heritage Australia Bulletin: # 1, July 2021

From time to time we all become aware of heritage news and other information that could be of interest or value to other members. However, its topicality and value is often short lived. This and the need for timely action, means it can't therefore wait for discussion at formal meetings. This bears on our need to be proactive, particularly in relation to advocacy.

To communicate a greater sharing of collective information, ideas, initiatives and achievements, we have instituted this electronic Engineering Heritage Bulletin. It does not replace or duplicate our Magazine, and it will be produced as and when appropriate.

All members of EHA - both National Committee and division groups are invited to contribute by emailing items to Michael Clarke at m.clarke32@optusnet.com.au.

Constructive feedback on the usefulness of the Bulletin would be appreciated.

Heritage & Conservation Engineering

The short course developed by EHA and the University of Canberra, provides an introduction to the skills to assess significance, and to understand the conservation needs of engineering and industrial heritage sites and items – see attached flyer.

The first course had 19 enrolments comprised of young engineers, as well as more experienced ones, an architect, archaeologist and heritage consultant. However, the final workshop component has been delayed due to Covid restrictions.

Review of NSW Heritage Act

The Terms of Reference, discussion paper and other details of the review of the NSW Heritage Act may be found at <https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/the-nsw-heritage-act-review-has-commenced/>; attached is Engineers Australia's response.

1942 Japanese submarine attack on Sydney

All episodes of the 6-Part Pod Cast Series on the Japanese 1942 Midget Submarine attack on Sydney by Allan Skinner and Tim Smith, Director Operations, Heritage NSW, may be listened to at <https://askilive.com.au/midgetsub/>

They include an account of the attack, discovery of the shipwreck, management of the tangible and intangible values, and international management perspective.

Gundagai Road and Railway Viaducts – conservation & interpretation

Simon Wiltshier and Amie Nicholas of EHS are on the Gundagai Road and Rail Viaduct Working Group. This group has been convened by Transport for NSW (Rail Viaduct) and Crown Lands (Road Viaduct) to come up with a heritage management strategy for the site. EHS have been engaged with Heritage NSW for some years to get the Road Viaduct site onto the State Heritage Register. The Rail Viaduct is already listed. Both structures are disused and derelict, with no hope of total restoration, because of both cost and lack of timber. However, the site as a whole, spread across the Murrumbidgee floodplain, has the potential for innovation in interpretation to provide a major tourism drawcard and to appropriately conserve heritage significance of these massive structures.

The interpretation is likely to include partial reconstruction to create viewpoints, and interpretive structures constructed across the floodplain. These may be linked by walking and cycle trails to activate an entire historic precinct, also taking in the site of Old Gundagai (the town wiped out by a flood).

The project has attracted ministerial interest and the community consultation phase is about to commence.

Harris Creek Rail Bridge

Harris Creek Rail Bridge at Heathcote Road, Holsworthy NSW, has been listed on the NSW State Heritage Register - SHR no: 02056

Balls Head Coal Loader Complex

Balls Head Coal Loader Complex at 10 balls Head Drive, Waverton NSW, has been listed on the NSW State Heritage Register - SHR no: 02051

Referral of DA's to the NSW Heritage Council

New guidelines for referral by councils of DA's to the NSW Heritage Council is available on the Council's website <https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/> - search for [Guidance for local councils](#), and [Integrated development](#) (for applicants).

NSW Public Works Department plans digitised

NSW Plan Services has digitised plans of more than 700,000 drawings of public buildings and infrastructure constructed by or through NSW Public Works over the last 200 years. Approximately 75% are architectural and engineering services drawings, and 25% are drawings of the State's major infrastructure (e.g. dams, sewerage schemes, bridges) and environment (e.g. rivers, harbours, reservoirs) – see attached *Capability Statement – PWA Plan Services.pdf*.

National EHA Initiatives

Engineers Australia / University of Canberra course in Heritage and Conservation Engineering

- Will fulfil the theoretical component of the requirements to become a Registered Heritage and conservation Engineer
- First course running
- On-site workshop in Sydney postponed due to covid

Advocacy Commonwealth Government

- Introduce improved Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act
- Include reference to Movable and Intangible Heritage in Australian Heritage Strategy
- Establish relationships with Commonwealth Heritage Departments (Environment and Arts)

Advocacy NSW State Government

- Submission to Review of NSW Heritage Act

Collaboration with (mainly movable) operating heritage community

- Facilitation of Operating Heritage Australia, an informal association of peak bodies representing 300,000 custodians of all types of operating heritage
- Technological heritage is largely overlooked by institutional museums, legislation and official support – aims to increase awareness of role and needs

- Maintaining technological heritage in operating condition requires maintenance of intangible knowledge and skills – aims to preserve knowledge and skills

Engineering Heritage Conservation Principles and Guidelines

- Practical document for engineers working on heritage projects with emphasis on assessment and conservation of items of engineering heritage significance.
- Sub-committee has prepared a revised version for comment by divisional groups

Engineering Heritage Recognition Program

- Review of principles, process and methods of recognising items of engineering heritage

Improved EHA Web Presence

- Increased functionality but slow development. Develop content to pilot on WA platform

Engineers Australia Activities Affecting EHA

Defining Areas of Engineering (those regulated by legislation) and Areas of Practice (those defined by EA)

- Heritage and Conservation Engineering is recognised as an Area of Engineering and an Area of Practice which gives the practice of H&CE the highest status within EA (similar to Civil, Structural, Mechanical, etc.)
- EHA will be expected to justify this status by taking responsibility for setting and maintaining professional standards for heritage engineering practice.

Learned Society Review (structure and governance of EA groups)

- EHA Sydney Divisional Group has elected to “opt out” for 2021
- This means that the changes will not apply in 2021 but could be applied at any time in the future.
- EA will expect more from EHA – business as usual is not an option in the long term

Frank Johnson

Chair, Engineering Heritage Sydney